

Unique Program To Set Sail

Baie d'Urfé Yacht Club & Club Nautique Deux Montagnes will Host First Heart of Sailing-Canada Voyages

Baie d'Urfé Yacht Club and Club Nautique Deux Montagnes will host the Heart of Sailing-Canada program's maiden voyages for the 2007 season. Its founder, George Saidah, a successful entrepreneur and software engineer, has combined his lifelong love of sailing with a driving desire to help children with cognitive disorders, such as mental retardation, autism, down syndrome and mental illness. This past Wednesday, Heart of Sailing-Canada will launch the program to deliver hope, educa-

tion and fun to children. The program will continue to operate on a regular basis from the Baie d'Urfé Yacht Club and from the Club Nautique Deux Montagnes.

Heart of Sailing-Canada, is a non-profit foundation funded in part by local and national foundations and corporations and their objective is to bring the wonder of the seafaring world to children with disabilities. The board of Heart of Sailing Canada, comprised of civic leaders from Montreal, named Christian Rabbat and Michel Rafie, invites sailors,

their parents or guardians, and other persons interested in volunteering or supporting this truly one-of-a-kind endeavor to join them at Baie d'Urfé or Deux Montagnes.

"I love sailing and this is a dream I have always wanted to accomplish," Saidah said. "There is nothing for kids with cognitive impairments in the sailing arena."

Participants will receive safety and sailing lessons and training in how to tie nautical knots. After the sailing program, the children will receive a certificate and a keepsake

Olympic style medal. All passengers will be outfitted with life-jackets and the boats are fully equipped with all necessary safety equipment. Saidah

is quick to point out, however, that the Heart of Sailing-Canada program offers more than just the simple pleasure of an afternoon on the water.

"The children will learn to the best of their ability how to sail," he said. "They will help sail the boat, they are the crew."

Last 2 years, this program proved its value to the sailors, their parents and guardians. Everyone that went sailing loved it, relaxed in a completely new environment and improved in some capacity their social skills, teamwork, confidence, self-esteem and knowledge of safety and sailing.

After a sail, one father wrote, "Galina loved it! I have rarely seen her light up the way she



This participant loved the whole day!

did when she got to sail the boat. The program had a most amazing track record with more than 1000 participants in the last two years. Its goal is to double this number to 2000 participants in 2007."

For more information on the Heart of Sailing-Canada program, to register your child for this event or to inquire about donations and sponsorship opportunities, log onto www.heartofsailing.org.